

NEGRO WELFARE LEAGUE OF NEW JERSEY

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Patriotic Talks Mark Negro Welfare Meeting

State League Observes Anniversary and Discusses Work
in Jersey.

Songs by Camp Dix Soldiers

Patriotism was accentuated by speakers addressing an audience greater than the seating capacity of the First Presbyterian Church last night at the first anniversary public meeting of the State Negro Welfare League, which was held there with the league's new president, Dr. W. H. Vail, presiding. Singing of "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and a number of negro melodies by a quintet of colored soldiers from Camp Dix was a special feature.

The interest of the colored people present was asked for the colored soldiers from Camp Dix who will take part in the soldiers' day celebration, April 27, by Mayor Gillen, who made an address expressing his interest in the league and stating his belief in the country's patriotism and invincibility.

Rev. Dr. William J. Dawson, pastor of the church, urged that people feel no dismay in the tidings of the fierce struggle of the Allies at this time, but rest secure in the ultimate triumph of this fight "for all that's decent in life." He spoke of his interest in negro welfare work, stating that it was an inheritance of his English birth, mentioning Wilberforce, Livingstone and other noted Englishmen who had worked for the negro race.

Girls' School Head Speaks.

Miss Nannie Burroughs, head of the Training School for Negro Girls at Washington, the principal speaker of the evening, made an appeal for Americanism, and, while urging that after the war many demands would be made by her race, she constantly qualified these by suggesting that the colored people fit themselves for them. She insisted on a square deal from opportunity to obligation.

Speaking of education, she said: "It's not so much whether you can get through the schools, but whether you can get the schools through you."

At the same time she did not conceal her belief that the negro has not yet had justice. "When the war is over," she declared, there will come a demand "that we do at home what we have promised abroad."

Touching on the housing problem, she urged the colored people to build up a reputation for themselves as desirable tenants by "making any place you live in clean and beautiful."

"The negro must put a value on himself," she said, "and come up to an American standard, not a negro standard."

What is needed, she insisted, is an effort to make every man and woman in America 100 per cent. American. "Segregation of a race is dangerous," she said, asserting, "Any time you drop a race to the bottom of civilization you are doing a very dangerous thing."

Gains in Year Cited.

Gains made during the year through the work of the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes was told by Eugene K. Jones of that society, who spoke of gains in housing conditions, industrial outlook and general welfare. He spoke especially of recent success in gaining the interest of prominent white business men in East St. Louis in organizing a branch there. At a meeting at which he was assisting, Mr. Jones said a group of leading men subscribed \$2,000 in two minutes for the enterprise and shortly afterward gave all asked for the budget—\$10,000.

Health work, including the observance of negro "health week" from April 21 to 27, was spoken of by Mr. Jones as one of the important welfare activities. He touched on the importance of developing agencies to deal with negro delinquency.

A. E. Rankins, chaplain of the 348th Field Artillery, was another speaker who in common with the others made appeals to the patriotism of the audience, which were received with great applause.

At the close of the meeting 200 members joined the league, and the contributions amounted to about \$175, including membership dues.

Miss Helen B. Pendleton, the secretary, read a letter from the executive secretary, William Ashby, who, at the request of the State Department of Labor, is in the South visiting colleges in an effort to obtain agricultural workers.

In addition to those already mentioned these persons took part in the program: Rev. J. R. Brown, Dr. W. G. Alexander of Orange, Rev. H. K. Spearman, Rev. W. J. Jones of Roselle.